

December 4, 2019

City of McMinnville Planning Department
Attn: Charles Darnell
231 NE Fifth Street
McMinnville, Oregon 97128

RE: Stafford – CPA 1-19; ZC 1-19; PDA 2-19; PD 1-19; s 1-19; L 2-19

Dear Mr. Darnell,

Stafford Development is asking for multiple zoning considerations for Baker Creek North. While I understand that McMinnville needs to increase density to fulfill state growth planning mandates, and I prefer increased density over enlarging the UGB, I hope both the City Planning Commission and the City Planning Department keep several things in mind during the negotiations.

Stafford wanted all the applicable ordinances honored for their “Baker Creek South” project because it gave them higher density than the then-applicable density and it gave them a large apartment complex that had no commercial center within ½ mile nor were there any mass transit routes in the area. We were told that Michelbook Golf Course was the nearest “commercial” center; the mass transit requirement was ignored; and remember that there was about 10 acres of commercial space on the north side of Baker Creek Road that would fulfill the ½ mile commercial center proximity requirement. OR 4626 specifically stated that there could be no residential on the C-3 acreage north of Baker Creek as a condition of getting a large apartment complex in a location that fit none of the requirements, as well as the higher density. I am not sure why the City believes it is not applicable. If the apartment portion was accepted, then it should all be accepted.

A portion of a letter that I wrote in January 2017 regarding Stafford Baker Creek South is below:

Ordinance 4626

...Section 3. 7. specifies that “the applicant shall initiate with the City a process which will result in the designation of a minimum net 10 acres of land on the north side of Baker Creek Road in close proximity to its intersection of Hill Road for commercial purposes. The process shall include the application of a planned development overlay **which restricts the property from use for residential purposes.**” I only mention that fact because of the applicant’s comment at the January 19, 2017 hearing that they plan to put a senior residential structure on that site. Additionally, I’m sure you know that McMinnville is already short

approximately 106 acres of commercially-designated land per state requirements. And finally, if that designation was not completed, I believe Ordinance 4626 is invalid since that designation was a condition of approval.

So now that Stafford got what they wanted on the south side, it is to their advantage to ignore the commercial requirement on the north side. I understand that they have not been able to figure out a commercial plan that can interest any tenants. I'm not sure why that is reason enough to allow them to significantly reduce the size of the commercial space that was a condition to get Stafford the other benefits they wanted.

I understand that Stafford was, shall we say, a bit enthusiastic about clearing the natural habitat along Baker Creek itself. I also recall reading about a \$19,000 fine for not containing run-off.

Stafford's "affordable" houses, planned to be in the \$240,000 range, are actually in the \$300,000 range. Their "high-end" houses adjacent to Michelbook Golf course are sold without heat pumps and with one garage door opener.

Stafford defended their design policies because McMinnville is a bedroom community to Portland. I believe we now have researched confirmation that McMinnville is more closely aligned with Salem than Portland. This is only relevant because it shows that Stafford is not, in fact, in tune with McMinnville.

While I do not appreciate the non-descript boxes that LGI has built, I do appreciate that they installed the fence, and street tree and landscaping portion of their build immediately, thus shielding the neighborhood from the construction mess and noise. They have also done a good job of maintaining their job sites and their landscaping. Stafford, on the other hand, has not maintained the mature Baker Creek Street landscaping since they purchased the property. A West Wind homeowner rode his lawnmower over and mowed the grass until he couldn't get through the road construction anymore. So, a paraplegic could maintain the landscaping, but Stafford wouldn't.

Another fun tidbit is that during all the Hill Road construction. Stafford vehicles, particularly their water truck, used the middle of 23rd as a parking lot so it was not available as a detour route until McMinnville engineering was notified and they told Stafford to keep the road clear.

My point in all of this is that Stafford has not shown itself to be a good neighbor in any way.

Finally, remember that there is a large apartment complex under construction on Evans. Premier is planning about 100 housing units north of Oak Ridge. Stafford's Baker Creek South is several hundred housing units including a large apartment complex. Stafford's Baker Creek North will be several hundred units. And I'm just listing the new construction immediately off of Baker Creek Road.

So as you consider all the special allowances Stafford wants, think about the following:

- What happens to traffic on Baker Creek Road?
- Does any of this construction count towards what McMinnville needs to account for beginning in 2021 or will McMinnville still need to come up with additional land and housing because of state mandates based on inflated population projections? Would it be in our best interest to delay until 2021?
- Is Stafford building what people move to McMinnville for? I agree that more apartments are needed, but as a city, we're committing to an enormous number, just along Baker Creek Road only. Also, a lot of us are transplants from other areas. Would the housing that Stafford is building be anything that would have drawn us to McMinnville? I have seen a preliminary plan that Ruden is developing for 40 acres by Hill Road and Fox Ridge. I think it's a much better plan and more suitable to McMinnville's needs and wants. It was eye-opening to me to drive through the small lot "affordable housing" of Stafford and then drive through Ruden's The Bungalows. Personally, I would have moved to McMinnville for The Bungalows. I'd keep looking if I had seen Stafford's stuff.

To quote Heather Richards, what is built now will last 100 years. I hope you all keep that in mind.

Patty O'Leary